

**Evaluation of the  
United Cambodian Community  
Development Foundation  
Vocational Training  
Program in  
Kampot, Cambodia**

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## ACRONYMS

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DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
HCN	host country national
LICADHO	Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights
LWVF	Leahy War Victims Fund
NGO	nongovernmental organization
UCC	United Cambodian Community
UCCDF	United Cambodian Community Development Foundation
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
VI	Veterans International

Map goes here.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The evaluation of the United Cambodian Community Development Foundation (UCCDF) Vocational Training Program on the Kampot campus found a well-designed, well-implemented, remarkably successful program. The competency-based training program builds technical skills through a combination of classroom-based theoretical and practical training, internships, start-up assistance (financed by leveraged funding), and follow-up.

During a week in Kampot Province, Cambodia, in early May 2000, the consultant observed the program; interviewed graduates, staff, provincial government officials, and representatives of other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the province; and reviewed documents. (Country Director Larrie Warren of Veterans International [VI] was also interviewed in Phnom Penh. UCCDF receives its grant from the Leahy War Victims Fund [LWVF] through the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID] as a subgrantee to VI.) The consultant conducted 48 interviews, 21 of which were with graduates of the program. Thirteen of the interviews were conducted in rural areas, at the graduates' respective businesses. During the observation period, the consultant also visited UCCDF's Chamcar Bei agricultural research and training site.

The UCCDF vocational training program relies on a number of educational components. Classroom training is devoted to practice (approximately 75 percent) and theory (25 percent). Training staff use feedback from follow-up with graduates to refine and enhance the technical training, adding new skills such as gas welding that have proven important to the success of graduates. Although technical training forms the basis of the program, UCCDF also provides business, literacy, and numeracy training; health education; HIV/AIDS awareness; and human rights education. Literacy, numeracy, and health-related training are delivered by contract instructors. Human rights education is provided by an NGO, Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICADHO), specializing in the subject. Graduates who were interviewed repeatedly praised UCCDF's training for building confidence as well as technical and business skills. Several graduates cited the internship as vital to their later success.

Although the consultant noted a high degree of success among the graduates who were visited, UCCDF has been unable to research the future need for additional graduates by sector and geographical area. The consultant is concerned that the program's strong success could result in oversaturation of the market for some vocations in some areas. UCCDF would need additional resources to conduct such a study.

UCCDF has a hierarchical structure. The current Country Director, an American, started the program in Cambodia in 1992 and has been running it since then. Four senior staff members are Cambodian-Americans (one of whom also joined the program at the beginning) who possess strong technical skills and knowledge. The remaining permanent staff members are local Khmer, some of whom are graduates of the program. The organization has five advisory committees with each staff member sitting on at least one committee. The Country Director and Deputy Director each sit on only one committee. Decisions are made by the Country Director and the Deputy Director; decision making is primarily in the hands of the Country Director, however. Outsiders very closely (and almost exclusively) associate the program with the Country Director. One observer even stated, "UCC equals Linda."

The consultant finds the closeness of the association risky; other staff members may eventually feel unrecognized and unappreciated because of it. The perception also may jeopardize the sustainability of the organization if an unplanned departure or incapacity takes the current Country Director away from the program. Outsiders, including donors and professional colleagues, may assume that UCCDF will be either incomplete or incompetent in the director's absence. Staff members expressed confidence in the ability of the Deputy Director to manage the program and the organization (except fundraising, which was cited as a concern by several staff members). That confidence has been largely untested, however; the Country Director, citing various reasons that prevent her from taking time off, rarely leaves the project for more than a few days at a time. To fully develop senior staff, UCCDF must provide more opportunities for the Deputy Director to demonstrate responsibility and exercise authority.

Another serious concern for the program is the relationship between the Country Directors of UCCDF and VI, which can be described as strained at best. Both parties admit the strain. VI's director has openly expressed his willingness to improve the relationship. UCCDF's Country Director initially stated her unwillingness but later said she would make an effort, with the help of a third-party mediator. Senior staff also mentioned the strained relationship, leading the consultant to believe that it may be starting to take a toll on leadership within the organization.

Country Director Linda McKinney remains passionate about the program, and as a result, she has been successful in seeking diversified funding for the project. The Country Director has expressed an interest in increasing her fundraising activity but is severely limited by other demands on her time and by the somewhat isolated location of her office in Kampot. In-country funding is limited, and substantial overseas funding is nearly impossible to solicit from Kampot. Greater diversification of funding is critical, though, to the long-term sustainability of UCCDF as an organization and to its training program.

Tardy delivery of standard reports and documents is another problem. The consultant experienced the tardiness firsthand, and VI also reported the problem.

Finally, the consultant observed three safety hazards at the Kampot feed mill: the absence of belt guards on two feed mill machines, the lack of hearing protection despite the high noise level in the feed mill, and the lack of eye protection. Such hazards put operators at risk for additional permanent disabilities.



On the basis of the above observations, the consultant makes the following recommendations, which address program development, organizational structure, administrative matters, collaboration, and safety:

- UCCDF should conduct a formal assessment of job market needs and saturation by sector and geographic area to prevent oversaturation. The assessment should identify an additional sector that is appropriate for female participants in particular, as there are currently few formal vocational opportunities for women; especially women with disabilities.
- A formal written staff development plan should be developed to ensure continued professional growth of each member and to strengthen the institutional capacity of the organization as a whole. A new position, Director of Financial Resource Development, should be created and, ideally, filled by Ms. McKinney, the current Country Director. The new position would enable Ms. McKinney to pursue greater fund-raising opportunities, particularly outside of Asia. The Director of Financial Resource Development should report to UCCDF's Board of Directors. The Deputy Director should be promoted to Country Director and also report to UCCDF's Board of Directors, with additional reporting responsibility to VI on all activities funded by LWVF and USAID. Other senior staff members should be evaluated as candidates to succeed the Deputy Director.
- Measures should be taken to ensure completion of administrative tasks and submission of reports on a timely basis.
- UCCDF should join and actively participate in the coordinating group of NGOs that work with persons with disabilities. The collaboration would allow UCCDF to access additional information from other NGOs in Cambodia and to share its experience and success with NGOs in other geographic areas.
- Noted safety hazards should be corrected immediately by making and attaching belt guards, providing industrial-grade hearing and eye protection, and enforcing the use of protective equipment while the feed mill is in operation.

## METHODOLOGY

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The consultant collected information for the evaluation primarily through observation, review of key documents and reports, and interviews with current students, graduates, UCCDF's Country Director, staff members, provincial government officials, representatives of other international NGOs operating in the province, and the Country Director of VI (UCCDF receives its LWVF-USAID funding as a subgrantee under USAID grantee VI).

Although the consultant conducted interviews with VI's Country Director in Phnom Penh, all other interviews were conducted in the field. During a week in Kampot Province, the consultant visited the UCCDF Kampot campus, the UCCDF Chamcar Bei agricultural research and training site, and a number of graduates' rural business sites. (Because the Kampot campus is the focus of this evaluation, the consultant will not report in any detail on the Chamcar Bei site [which was very impressive].)

Approximately 50 individuals were interviewed, including 21 graduates. Most interviews were conducted individually, without UCCDF Country Director Linda McKinney. On one occasion, an interview with international NGO representatives was cut short when the director came to the interview site and sat at a neighboring table. When possible, interviews were conducted in English without an interpreter. When an interpreter was needed, a member of UCCDF's teaching staff usually filled the role. On rare occasions (including a meeting with provincial government officials), UCCDF senior management staff interpreted.

Most graduates who were interviewed lived well outside Kampot town, but generally near important highways or in good-sized towns. Recent rains made less-traveled roads in the area impassable, thereby preventing interviews with graduates in more remote areas.

The consultant also reviewed numerous internal reports and documents, policies, and procedures provided by VI directly or by UCCDF, including annual work plans, quarterly reports, the draft of the 1999 annual report, student intake forms, curricula for technical training, course exams, business start-up summary charts, an organizational chart, job descriptions, and local staff personnel policies. UCCDF's first quarter 2000 report was not available for review (the consultant was told it had not been compiled). As dictated by the Terms of Reference (Appendix

A)—and because a formal independent audit of UCCDF’s financial reporting is scheduled to take place by the end of June 2000—the consultant focused on programmatic impact rather than financial reporting.

Final analysis of all notes and documents was made in Phnom Penh following the field visit.

## OBSERVATIONS

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### Vocational Training Program

Having designed and implemented a comprehensive vocational training program that goes beyond simply transferring technical skills, UCCDF consistently delivers quantifiable and qualitative benefits to program beneficiaries.

The curriculum incorporates business, numeracy, and literacy training to build students' abilities to start and maintain small businesses in an environment where employment opportunities are rare. UCCDF also provides basic health education, limited health care services or referrals, HIV/AIDS awareness, and human rights education. UCCDF provides health-related services and human rights education either by contracting with local instructors and health professionals or by coordinating with nearby NGOs that conduct such training. (Human rights classes, for example, are generally provided by a French-Cambodian NGO, LICADHO).

UCCDF's technical training is competency based, thereby ensuring a high level of skill among graduates. All students are tested regularly on both theory and practice, with practice generally accounting for 75 percent of the coursework and examinations.

By setting high standards for personal behavior in its classrooms and residential facilities, UCCDF also promotes cooperation, harmony, mutual respect, and support—qualities that have been lacking in Cambodia's recent history.

Another important and somewhat unusual aspect of UCCDF's training program is the internship that each student must complete before graduation. In the last six to eight weeks of training, students are placed with local businesses as interns. The internship allows students to learn about customer service and how to price their services, as well as to practice their new technical skills. Graduates praised UCCDF's internship program for building their confidence and self-esteem.

Of the graduates who were interviewed, those who accepted UCCDF interns in their own businesses also praised the internship program for providing opportunities for the student and the business owner. Because not all students are living at the UCCDF residential site during their internships, UCCDF provides modest financial support for them at that time.

Using leveraged funds from the Trickle Up Foundation, UCCDF also provides start-up assistance to new graduates. Depending on the sector they have chosen to work in, the graduates receive tools, livestock, and/or cash. Assistance is provided in two installments.

Finally, UCCDF conducts follow-up visits to most, if not all, graduates. Follow-up serves a number of useful purposes and should be maintained as an integral part of the program even though the benefits are difficult to quantify. The visits allow UCCDF staff to collect and compile quantitative data on the program's success. At the same time, the follow-up allows staff members to assess which aspects of the training curricula are most effective and which training needs are not being met (particularly as technology in the marketplace changes), to provide technical assistance when graduates encounter small problems or unfamiliar situations, and to continue the camaraderie and collegial relationship among staff members, students, and graduates. In many cases, such ongoing contact has enabled UCCDF to place student interns in graduates' businesses.

Resource limitations prevent UCCDF from conducting all its follow-up directly. To follow up graduates from distant provinces, UCCDF sometimes depends on other NGOs working in those provinces. Even though UCCDF appears to have the cooperation of other NGOs, non-UCCDF staff are less likely to be able to provide additional technical advice to graduates in need, and the quality and quantity of feedback to UCCDF's training staff on unmet training needs could be reduced.

Overall, the well-rounded nature of the UCCDF vocational training ensures that the students will graduate with the best possible chance of starting a small private business with confidence, managing it well, and remaining healthy in order to support themselves and their families for the long term.

Although the consultant requested the opportunity to interview graduates who had not started or continued a business, UCCDF was not able to arrange that. In fact, according to UCCDF follow-up records, there are very few individuals who have graduated, started an enterprise, and ceased to operate the business after a minimum of six months. (Because of the large number of graduates relative to UCCDF follow-up staff and the distant locations of an increasing number of graduates, UCCDF cannot realistically maintain accurate records beyond six months to a year after graduation.) Of 609 graduates from cycles 1 through 12 (cycle 13 is still in follow-up), 32 (5 percent) did not start businesses. Of the 577 graduates who started businesses, only 2 graduates did not operate them after at least six months. In some cases, the graduate found other opportunities. (One graduate became a teacher because he was one of the few villagers who could read and write, and another graduate changed to selling coconuts but still made use of the business knowledge gained from UCCDF's programs.) In some cases, ill health caused graduates to discontinue their businesses. Under certain circumstances, discontinuations should not be considered negative. In fact, compared to the vocational training programs around the world that the consultant has been familiar with, UCCDF has a much higher graduate success rate than most.

A large percentage of the graduates and students who were interviewed reported that they were referred to UCCDF by earlier graduates of the program. Graduates repeatedly stated that the training they received through UCCDF has enabled them to make measurable differences in their

lives: having regular income for the first time, building or buying a new or larger home, buying bicycles to send their children to school, providing employment for other members of the community. Not one graduate who was interviewed cited a more difficult life after graduation. Provincial officials also praised the effectiveness of UCCDF's program in helping participants make positive changes in their life—particularly in their ability to financially support themselves and their families. Other NGO representatives described masses of amputee beggars in local markets before and during the program's earliest days, but they have said they no longer see such sights. Those individuals credit UCCDF's vocational training with significantly improving the situation. (See Appendix C for specific testimonials and quotes from interviewees.)

An additional strength is the organization's attention to refining or enhancing the training program as UCCDF identifies new or changed market demands within its current sectors. For example, UCCDF has added gas welding to the small engine repair course on the basis of an observed need for the skill among the graduates. Another example is the addition of color TV repair and CD player repair to the electronics course because a greater number of people in the marketplace have acquired such equipment (and such equipment is more frequently in need of repair if it is acquired secondhand). Continued refinement and updating of training will remain important.

UCCDF calculates the cost of the Kampot campus vocational training program in the 1998 calendar year to range (in U.S. currency) from a low of \$769 per beneficiary for students in electronics repair to a high of \$1,222 per beneficiary for students in small engine repair. For 1999, costs ranged from \$860 for students in electronics repair to \$1,205 for students in small engine repair. Those figures include costs associated with adult education (health, literacy, numeracy), personnel (instructors, benefits, health care, taxes), student residential services (housing, food), training supplies, and student expenses (transportation, health care), as well as a percentage of the Country Director's and Deputy Director's salaries, local staff costs, and office expenses. If program benefits extend beyond the direct beneficiaries (i.e., graduates) to family members supported by the graduates' income, costs per beneficiary drop. Those costs range from \$154 (for electronics repair students) to \$244 (for small engine repair students) for 1998. Comparable figures for 1999 range from \$172 to \$241 respectively. (The calculations assume an average of four additional indirect beneficiaries for each direct beneficiary.)

One of the consultant's programmatic concerns is the potential for oversaturating a given market with UCCDF graduates. UCCDF is aware of the possibility but has been unable to systematically study the issue because of limited financial and human resources. UCCDF has partially addressed the concern by more frequently training individuals from more distant provinces where fewer individuals have already been trained. In Kampot Province, however, UCCDF should study and quantify the need for additional graduates in small engine repair, particularly in those areas that are already well served by UCCDF's program.

A second area of concern is the limited options for female students. UCCDF offers training in three sectors: small engine repair, electronics, and small animal husbandry (poultry and pigs). Although female students are not restricted from any of the sectors, small engine repair and electronics do not appear to be readily open to women for societal or cultural reasons. Ideally, the consultant would like to see UCCDF provide training in at least one additional sector that is particularly appropriate for female target beneficiaries. UCCDF would need to conduct research

to determine the most appropriate sector for filling a market demand and being socially and culturally accessible to women.

## UCCDF's Institutional Capacity

UCCDF's Country Director, an American, has been head of the project since it began in 1992. She remains passionate about the program, the organization, and the beneficiaries. Senior staff members include four Cambodian-Americans, one of whom (a Senior Small Engine Repair Instructor) has also been with the project since its beginning. All remaining permanent employees and most contractors are from the local Khmer population. The Cambodian-Americans have brought not only a strong desire to help their fellow countrymen and women but also technology from more developed countries (including but not limited to the United States and some Asian countries). Several junior staff members are graduates of UCCDF's training program. They are valuable staff members who provide incomparable motivation for UCCDF students. They often engage in formal and informal counseling with students who are facing difficulties, drawing on their experience as persons with disabilities and as former program participants to encourage students. UCCDF has a deeply committed and enthusiastic staff. Two Cambodian-American senior staff members, Mr. Sine Saphran and Mr. San Chhaysidhy, also show particularly strong leadership ability. Because of his positive and mature influence, Mr. Saphran has been called "father" by staff and students.

County Director Linda McKinney and Mr. Saphran, who have worked with the project since its start, have done an excellent job of designing, implementing, and refining the project, with help from more recently engaged staff. Those two individuals also possess the "institutional memory" of the organization. Because UCCDF has a very small U.S. home office, in-country staff members have been largely responsible for the organization's success.

UCCDF in Cambodia has a typical hierarchical structure (see Appendix C for its organizational chart), plus five staff advisory committees: Instruction, Finance, Personnel Policies, Student Discipline, and Feed Mill. Each member of the UCCDF staff, including the cook and guards, serves on at least one committee. UCCDF's Country Director and Deputy Director sit on only the Finance Committee. Committees discuss issues, opportunities, and problems within their functional area and make recommendations to UCCDF's Country Director and Deputy Director for final decisions. UCCDF's organizational structure allows a greater degree of representational management than a standard hierarchical organizational structure.

Despite UCCDF's experienced and highly motivated staff, the organization's institutional capacity needs to be strengthened. The Country Director is deeply involved in the ongoing operations of the organization and has been since the beginning. It was not apparent to the consultant, however, whether the Deputy Director, a Cambodian-American who brought NGO management experience from Rhode Island, makes any day-to-day operating decisions himself; it did not seem likely that he makes any long-range strategic decisions within the organization, either. Staff expressed confidence in the Deputy Director's ability to run the program and the organization in the absence of the Country Director, with the possible exception of fundraising (a concern expressed by several individuals). Those circumstances haven't been substantially

tested, though. The consultant is not totally confident that the Deputy Director is ready to assume complete responsibility for management of the program and organization. In an organized transition, the Country Director would mentor the Deputy Director while the latter assumes greater authority and responsibility. It is the consultant's belief, as well as USAID's mandate, that NGOs should, where possible, develop the ability of host country nationals (HCNs) (including returning HCNs) to manage and sustain programs. Upon offering further skill development and capacity building, to senior staff, UCCDF will have a number of individuals capable of running UCCDF.

Because of the Country Director's long-term presence, strong ongoing involvement, and high profile in the community, many individuals outside UCCDF relate the organization and the program to the Country Director rather than to the underlying staff. When a dynamic and energetic individual plays a key role in an organization over time, such an association is common. While such associations may seem harmless, they deflect well-deserved credit from the contributions of other staff members. Morale may be undermined if staff members begin to feel unappreciated or unrecognized. If outsiders view the organization and a particular individual as inseparable, they may view the organization as incomplete or incompetent if that individual is no longer part of the organization. Most well-managed private sector enterprises and well-run NGOs, as well as many governments, groom an "heir apparent," deliberately giving more responsibility, authority, and public exposure to the successor as a contingency plan, if not a primary strategy, for sustainability.

A separate problem for UCCDF—and one which appears to be common—is tardiness in reporting and in other administrative tasks. As of May 10, 2000, the consultant was unable to review the first quarter 2000 report because it had not been compiled. When the consultant requested standard administrative and managerial documents such as an organizational chart, a policy manual, and job descriptions, she was told the Country Director needed time to gather them. In fact, the organizational chart was requested three times and provided six days after the initial request. VI also experienced delays in receiving routine, regularly scheduled reports, as well as repeated and lengthy delays in the scheduling of a required financial audit. Justification for the delays ranged from a broken printer (and the need to copy reports to a diskette in order to print from another computer) to unresponsiveness on the part of outside consulting companies in scheduling the audit.

While senior staff seemed to be involved in (but not necessarily responsible for) day-to-day management, none seemed very involved in fund-raising activities despite the Country Director's efforts to build and diversify UCCDF's funding. Several key staff members cited that uninvolvement as their main concern about sustainability of the organization if the Country Director were to leave. Given the importance of establishing and cultivating relationships with potential donors over long periods of time, UCCDF is already late in involving the Deputy Director in fund-raising activities.

In its effort to stretch finite resources, UCCDF has engaged the services of many volunteers over the course of the project in Kampot. Volunteers have assisted with varied activities, including teaching English, conducting seminars, providing manual labor, and sharing technical assistance and guidance. Volunteers have contributed a few hours to a few months. Because UCCDF has no formal volunteer program, supervision varies from case to case. Volunteer activity appears to be



a relatively small part of UCCDF's provision of services. Although volunteer activity should not be discounted, it should not receive significant resources to manage or develop it, either, given the demands on management resources.

UCCDF's stated mission is as follows:

[To use] its local network to expand other NGOs' services and [make] other organizations' work easier. Not to be the largest NGO but to package techniques and learning for other NGOs (e.g. the Chamcar Bei research and training site). To do more to "affect import substitution" because most Kampot and Phnom Penh food is currently imported. This would be realized through promotion of UCCDF seedlings, through research, training, and marketing strategies. Lastly, to implement programs that have building client self-confidence and self-esteem at their core.

Although the specific activities mentioned as components of UCCDF's mission have merit, the organization should have a more focused mission statement that articulates its values or guiding principles and its overall goal.

In discussing future plans, UCCDF's Country Director and Deputy Director listed several specific activities directly related to the Kampot Vocational Training Program that include but are not limited to

- Implementation of internal financial tracking systems for improved financial control
- Continued diversification of funding sources
- Pursuit of contracts with the demobilization program and DANIDA's coastal management program
- Addition of new sectors in Kampot campus program

Progress has been made in some areas and not in others. UCCDF has begun implementation of improved financial controls with the short-term hire of a controller in preparation for the upcoming audit. UCCDF's Country Director has also regularly and successfully pursued new donors, but she has been severely constrained by the time demands of other job responsibilities and by geographic isolation from major funding sources. Formal written plans need to be developed for the other activities mentioned above.

## **Relationship between UCCDF and Veterans International**

Although LWVF finances the majority of UCCDF's work and expenses, funding is channeled through USAID to VI. UCCDF is in turn a USAID subgrantee of VI for this project. As a result, UCCDF is in a subordinate reporting relationship to VI. It is the consultant's understanding, based on conversations with USAID representatives, that current and future LWVF-USAID

funding will only be channeled to UCCDF through VI in a subgrantee relationship—not directly from USAID to UCCDF.

The relationship between UCCDF and VI is a major concern to the consultant. Country Directors Larrie Warren and Linda McKinney admit that the relationship between their organizations is troubled. Mr. Warren has expressed a strong desire to build a more congenial professional relationship, and written communication from Mr. Warren to Ms. McKinney that was reviewed by the consultant displayed a professional attitude. When interviewed by the consultant, Ms. McKinney clearly stated her unwillingness to improve the relationship and cited various reasons to justify her attitude. She later rescinded that position and said she is willing to try to work through the differences between herself and Mr. Warren to forge a more positive working relationship.

Though UCCDF senior staff reported no significant difficulties in their more limited interaction with Mr. Warren, one individual expressed the need for a third-party mediator during any future direct communication between Ms. McKinney and Mr. Warren. That individual also voiced an unprompted defense of Ms. McKinney's attitude concerning the difficulties in the relationship. Those declarations indicate to the consultant that Ms. McKinney's attitude and behavior as far as the UCCDF–VI relationship is concerned are beginning to influence UCCDF staff members' perception of the situation between the two Country Directors. It is uncertain whether the staff will always distinguish between the Country Directors and their organizations. The situation causes ongoing tension, provides a negative example for the staff rather than a role model, and risks further tainting the relationship between UCCDF and VI staff. The relationship needs to be improved substantially or discontinued. Given UCCDF's subgrantee relationship to VI, severing the directors' working relationship could jeopardize a continuation of LWVF-USAID funding for UCCDF and for that reason is not considered a viable option by the consultant. The consultant believes that with willingness on both sides and initial mediation by a third party skilled in conflict resolution, the County Directors can mend and rebuild their relationship to a workable one.

## **Other**

When visiting the UCCDF feed mill at Kampot Province, the consultant observed three dangers to employees. Two machines in the feed mill have machine belts (similar to fan belts) with no guards to protect employees if a belt breaks and flies off the machine. The situation needs to be corrected immediately by manufacturing a metal cover to fit over the belt. (UCCDF's Country Director agreed to promptly correct the hazard.) Another problem is that operators do not wear hearing protection of any sort despite a high level of noise from the machines. Operators should be provided with industrial-quality hearing protection and required to wear it whenever a machine is in operation. Similarly, no eye protection is worn, thereby leaving machine operators susceptible to flying debris from feed mill inputs or broken parts. Injuries from such dangers could permanently disable an operator or someone in the immediate vicinity of the operating machine. A flying belt can be fatal. Hearing loss occurs gradually over repeated exposure to even moderately high levels of noise, and it occurs without notice. Hearing loss of that nature is irreversible and not overcome by hearing aids.

The consultant did not observe any mechanical problems with project vehicles, but several senior staff members spoke of frequent breakdowns or malfunctions. They attributed the problem to rough roads, which cause heavy wear and tear on vehicles.

A group meets regularly in Phnom Penh to coordinate the NGOs that work with persons with disabilities. UCCDF does not participate in the group. UCCDF's Country Director cited the time required to travel to and participate in the meeting as the deterrent. Nonetheless, the consultant believes that a senior UCCDF staff member should participate regularly in the group's meetings and activities. (The Country Director does not need to represent UCCDF; subordinate staff members are competent to participate.) As participants in the coordinating groups, UCCDF staff members would have greater contact with geographically diverse NGOs and would learn from those NGOs—while getting the public exposure necessary to help combat the perception that “UCC equals Linda.” In the interest of helping persons with disabilities in Cambodia, UCCDF should be sharing its experience and success with others in the field. UCCDF's Country Director or Deputy Director travels to Phnom Penh approximately three to four times a month. Those regular trips, particularly by the Deputy Director, could be scheduled to accommodate the coordinating group's meetings.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE UCCDF VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

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### Strengths

Programmatic	Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive approach (i.e., training in technical skills, business, literacy, numeracy, health, HIV/AIDS, human rights, and behavioral standards of good conduct for community living)</li> <li>• Competency-based training, including internship, follow-up, continuing education seminars</li> <li>• Fostering of self-confidence among students and mutual respect between students and staff</li> <li>• Evolving curriculum that incorporates improvements as they are recognized or available</li> <li>• Leveraging of LWVF-USAID funding to secure money from other sources in order to enhance the primary program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deeply committed staff</li> <li>• Highly experienced staff, including UCCDF graduates</li> <li>• Functioning staff committees that help implement team approach to program and site management</li> <li>• Respect from the community, government, other NGOs, and graduates</li> <li>• Enthusiastic Country Director</li> <li>• Select Khmer teaching staff with exceptionally strong leadership ability and influence</li> </ul>

## Weaknesses

Programmatic	Organizational
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of research to assess market saturation for currently taught skills or to quantify potential for new sectors; lack of resources to fund such research in future</li> <li>• Limited sector and skill options for female students</li> <li>• Difficulty in providing direct follow-up to students from remote provinces</li> <li>• Nonparticipation in a coordinating group for NGOs that work with persons with disabilities</li> <li>• Lack of safety procedures, equipment, and guards at the feed mill</li> <li>• Frequent vehicle mechanical problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncooperative relationship between Country Directors at VI and UCCDF</li> <li>• No evidence of willingness by UCCDF Country Director to improve relationship with VI Country Director, thereby suggesting need for a mediator</li> <li>• Closeness of the association between the organization and the director (i.e., “UCC equals Linda”)</li> <li>• Underuse of Deputy Director’s experience and leadership skills</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge, experience, and confidence in fundraising among Khmer senior staff</li> <li>• Tendency by top UCCDF managerial staff to personalize common operational difficulties and standard managerial or oversight questions and requests as patronizing or offensive (e.g., unanswered e-mails are assumed received but ignored rather than considered potentially undelivered; questioning the life of the project beyond the current Country Director is taken as a personal affront)</li> <li>• Country Director’s apparent inability to take time off away from the project (e.g., vacation or home leave)</li> <li>• Delays in delivering administrative reports and documents (including on-file documents)</li> </ul>

## EVALUATION

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The programmatic aspects of the UCCDF Vocational Training Program in Kampot Province, Cambodia, are generally well designed and well implemented. The staff is deeply committed and brings valuable and appropriate technical skills and experience to the project. The program enjoys a positive reputation inside and outside UCCDF.

Organizationally, UCCDF has a hierarchical structure with a very strong Country Director at the top. Authority and decision making are exercised primarily by the Country Director. Although two instructional staff members exhibit strong leadership qualities in addition to teaching abilities, the Deputy Director should be provided with more opportunities to take responsibility, exercise authority, and demonstrate and build leadership and management abilities. It is the consultant's understanding that during the past several months, the Deputy Director has been taking greater responsibility for key aspects of the UCCDF's day-to-day operations (e.g., financial management). The trend needs to continue. Although the program enjoys a positive reputation among outsiders, it is too closely associated with the Country Director rather than the staff or the organization as a whole.

UCCDF, as a subgrantee of VI, is in a subordinate position to it. The relationship between the Country Directors of the two organizations is strained to the point where, the consultant believes, permanent damage to UCCDF staff is possible. VI Country Director Larrie Warren has expressed a desire to improve the relationship. UCCDF Country Director Linda McKinney initially expressed her unwillingness to do so. However, in a follow-up meeting in Phnom Penh, Ms. McKinney acknowledged that it is important to address the nature of the working relationship between the two Country Directors and agreed to talk through the problems with Mr. Warren and a mediator.

Tardiness in reporting is a problem for UCCDF. Although UCCDF's Country Director readily produced justifications, the consultant maintains that much of the tardiness is inappropriate.

Finally, three serious safety hazards at the UCCDF Kampot feed mill were noted: lack of belt guards on equipment and lack of hearing and eye protection for equipment operators. The safety hazards should be corrected immediately to prevent injury to staff. UCCDF's Country Director and Deputy Director indicated that they will rectify the situations promptly.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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Recommendations are categorized as programmatic or organizational. The latter are more pressing and critical to the long-term sustainability of UCCDF.

### Programmatic Issues

The consultant advises UCCDF to conduct a study of market needs by geographic area and of saturation by sector to ensure that it does not train too many individuals in one skill sector or geographic area. The study should also include a quantifiable assessment of opportunities for new sectors, particularly those suitable to female participants. Because current resources have been already assigned, UCCDF should seek other funding for such a study.

### Organizational Issues

UCCDF should address two key organizational issues: (1) improving the working relationship between UCCDF's Country Director Linda McKinney and VI's Country Director Larrie Warren and (2) building the long-term sustainability of the NGO through diversified fundraising and increased staff development.

The relationship between the Country Directors of UCCDF and VI has declined to the point that only face-to-face talks will enable them to resolve their differences. Meeting with a skilled third-party mediator may be the most effective way to clear up past misunderstandings or frustrations and move forward. The consultant recommends that the two parties make the effort.

For UCCDF to survive in the long term, it must broaden and diversify its major sources of funding and strengthen its institutional capacity by further developing management capabilities of senior staff. To aid staff development and the Country Director's interest in expanding and diversifying fundraising, the consultant proposes a change in the roles and responsibilities of top management.

First, the current Country Director would be moved into the newly created position of Director of Financial Resource Development. The move would allow Ms. McKinney to draw on her demonstrated skill in fundraising and her established network of supporters, and to dedicate the



necessary time and effort to diversifying UCCDF's sources of funding. The move would also lessen UCCDF's dependence on LWVF-USAID funding, which will eventually cease. Because in-country funding is limited and out-of-country fundraising is nearly impossible from Kampot, the change would allow Ms. McKinney to seek funding from abroad. The Director of Financial Resource Development should report to UCCDF's Board of Directors.

Second, promoting the current Deputy Director to the position of Country Director would not only reward a key staff member for performance but also provide him with an even greater opportunity to develop professionally while Ms. McKinney is active within the organization and available for mentoring. Ms. McKinney could continue to maintain a position on select advisory committees, but authority and decision making should transfer fully to the new Country Director. In-country representational duties should transfer to the new Country Director while out-of-country representational responsibility would follow Ms. McKinney to her new position. Although responsibility for fundraising would be held by the Director of Financial Resource Development, a formal plan should be devised to involve the new Country Director in in-country fund-raising activities in order to build his experience in that area. The Country Director should report directly to UCCDF's Board of Directors, with reporting responsibility to LWVF-USAID through VI on all LWVF-USAID-funded activities.

The final proposed change would be to select a successor Deputy Director from the current senior staff on the basis of performance appraisals and demonstrated skills and potential. As with the Deputy Director's promotion, this move rewards hardworking staff and provides opportunities for further professional development. Additional training should be provided as necessary (e.g., in financial management).

Professional development activities for other staff members will vary and should be designed according to individual performance evaluations. Such activities may include enhancement of technical knowledge and skills. The Country Director and the Deputy Director should draw up a formal plan with a specific time line for implementation.

The consultant believes that the proposed staff changes provide a "win-win" solution to a number of the critical organizational issues facing UCCDF. The recommendation allows Ms. McKinney to focus on an important area in which she excels and has expressed interest. It increases the chances for long-term sustainability of the organization by substantially improving opportunities for fundraising and funding diversification. It rewards staff for dedication and hard work through promotion and provides new opportunities for professional development, thereby strengthening the institutional capacity of the organization as a whole. The consultant recommends that UCCDF begin implementation of the proposed changes within six months.

## **Other Issues**

UCCDF should begin participating in the Phnom Penh–based coordination group for NGOs that work with persons with disabilities. Participation in that group should be the responsibility of the current Deputy Director; the opportunity will broaden his public exposure and give him greater experience in representing UCCDF.

Finally, the noted safety hazards in the Kampot feed mill must be corrected without delay.

## APPENDIX A: SCOPE OF WORK

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According to the Terms of Reference established by LWVF, the consultant was required to focus on three areas in the UCCDF evaluation.

- I. Assessment of the UCCDF vocational training program on the Kampot campus for persons with disabilities
  - A. Status of graduates
    - 1. Employment situation (e.g., Are they working? Are they employed in the field they were trained in?)
    - 2. Postprogram circumstances (tangible and intangible) (Are they economically better off?)
  - B. Program costs (including per beneficiary costs)
  - C. Development and refinement of leadership skills
  - D. Other relationships (business partnerships, marriages, referrals)
  - E. Prospects for increased training
  - F. Adequacy and value of follow-up
- II. Assessment of UCCDF's institutional capacity
  - A. Strengths and weaknesses
  - B. Role and supervision of volunteers
  - C. Future plans
  - D. Vision of the organization
  - E. Organization's future after the current Country Director

### III. Definition and assessment of the relationship between UCCDF and VI

#### A. Suggestions to improve relationship

#### B. Structure for an effective working relationship

Under the Terms of Reference, the consultant will provide a debriefing to USAID, VI Country Director Larrie Warren, and UCCDF Country Director Linda McKinney in Phnom Penh before departing Cambodia. The consultant will also submit a formal written report to Rob Horvath of LWVF in Washington, DC. LWVF will submit a final written report to USAID.

The evaluation was conducted during the first two weeks of May 2000. During that time, the consultant traveled to Kampot Province to observe the program, meet with current students and others familiar with the program, and interview program graduates.

## **APPENDIX B: INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED\***

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### **UCCDF Staff**

Ms. Linda McKinney, Country Director  
Mr. Sovanna K. Sip (“Chem”), Deputy Director  
Mr. Leang Kirirath, Administrative Services  
Mr. Sine Saphran, Senior Small Engine Repair Instructor  
Mr. Chuon Sareth, Junior Small Engine Repair Instructor  
Mr. Chhieng Vanny, Senior Electronics Instructor  
Ms. Say Saroeun, Junior Electronics Instructor  
Mr. Keo Sovannady, Senior Livestock Instructor  
Mr. Um Sarin, Marketing Manager  
Mr. San Chhaysidhy (“Chay”), Business Support Manager  
Mr. Kao Chreung, Follow-up  
Dr. Lao Chantha, Consulting Physician and Family Health Instructor  
Mr. Chap Chham, Literacy and Mathematics Contract Instructor  
Mr. Yin Sokhon, UCCDF Feed Mill  
Mr. Bonika San (“BK”), Chamcar Bei Site Manager

### **VI Staff**

Mr. Larrie Warren, Country Director, Veterans International

### **Graduates (Individually, at Their Place of Business)**

Mr. Tea Sokkhien, Small Engine Repair (1st cycle)  
Mr. Phuong Pha, Small Engine Repair (2nd cycle)  
Mr. Prak Beth, Small Engine Repair (3rd cycle)  
Mr. Sveysevay SETHA, Small Engine Repair (6th cycle)  
Mr. Chea Sampo, Small Engine Repair (4th cycle)  
Ms. Mahuoy, Poultry Raising (7th cycle)

\* All individuals are UCCDF staff members unless otherwise noted.

Mr. Sosokhom, Small Engine Repair (2nd cycle)  
Mr. Mak Nhorn, Small Engine Repair (3rd cycle)  
Mr. Simphang, Electronics Repair (7th cycle)  
Mr. Heng Phoc Hai, Small Engine Repair (3rd cycle)

## **Graduates (in Panel Discussion at the Kampot Campus)**

Ms. Keo Vankea, Poultry Raising (12th cycle) (also interviewed individually)  
Ms. Yem Yutheara Vorleak, Poultry Raising (6th cycle) (also interviewed individually)  
Ms. Touch Phally, Poultry Raising (12th cycle) (also interviewed individually)  
Mr. Kunk Ny, Poultry Raising (3rd cycle)  
Mr. Nget Pich, Small Engine Repair (2nd cycle)  
Mr. Nhet Noeurn, Small Engine Repair (8th cycle)  
Mr. Tuon Vichea, Small Engine Repair (6th cycle)  
Mr. Seng Chry, Poultry Raising (3rd cycle)  
Mr. Nop Hen, Small Engine Repair (1st cycle)  
Mr. Phou Samut, Small Engine Repair (2nd cycle)  
Mr. Heng Sry, Small Engine Repair (2nd cycle)

## **Students (in Brief Introductory Discussions at the Kampot Campus)**

All students in class on May 1, 2000 (two absent because of illness)

## **Government Officials**

Mr. H. E. Chhim, First Vice Governor, Kampot Province  
Mr. Duong Sarann, Deputy Chief, Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor, Veterans, and Youth  
(MOSALVY), Kampot Province  
Mr. Em Sovanny, Representative, Kampong Bay District, Kampot Province  
Mr. Ly Po, MOSALVA, Kampot Province

## **Interns**

Mr. They Vuthy, Professor of Agribusiness, Prek Liep Institute, Phnom Penh, and participant in internship for agricultural professionals  
Mr. So SETHA, Professor of Agribusiness, Prek Liep Institute, and participant in internship for agricultural professionals

## **NGO Representatives**

Mr. Sinoun, Officer Manager, MEMISA (a Dutch health education NGO)

Mr. Tepnaroath Soseng, Investigation Specialist, LICADHO Human Rights NGO (teaches UCCDF class on human rights)

Ms. Martina Berg Schneider and colleague, GTZ

## APPENDIX C: TESTIMONIALS OF BENEFICIARIES

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“Before, my family had nothing to eat. They are 60 percent better now”—Mr. Tea Sokhien, 1st cycle Small Engine Repair graduate, amputee

“I used to be a wood carrier, earning only a small amount of money. Some days there was no work, and I could only work in the dry season. I had to work in the Khmer Rouge area. I studied small engine repair with UCCDF. After working and saving money, I bought my own house. I would not have been able to buy a house without my training from UCC”—Mr. Sveysevay Setha, 6th cycle Small Engine Repair graduate, amputee (Mr. Setha has a successful small engine repair shop and stocks spare parts. His wife sells gasoline and engine oil at the shop.)

Before attending UCCDF, Mr. Chea Sampo only knew how to repair bicycles. As a 4th cycle Small Engine Repair graduate, Mr. Sampo now repairs bicycles, motorbikes, and rice mill engines. He first started working in 1995 but had to move his shop in 1999. He has a new location about 25 kilometers from Kampot town. He also built a house. Mr. Sampo says, “I think better and know business better because of my training at UCC.” Mr. Sampo also says, “Before the internship, I knew how to make repairs but not do business. After the internship, I was confident to start a business in my own shop.” Mr. Sampo learned about UCCDF from a relative who had graduated from the program.

Ms. Mahuoy is permanently disabled from cerebral palsy. She heard about UCCDF when she was looking for work. A 7th cycle Poultry Raising graduate, Ms. Mahuoy reported, “Before UCCDF, people looked down on me because I am handicapped. They thought I am crazy. Now I feel good about myself. Before UCCDF, I baked cakes and sold a few. I had to depend upon my sister to survive. Now I can solve most of my problems myself.” Ms. Mahuoy currently has 13 hens, 1 rooster, and 95 chickens. While at UCCDF, she also learned to give medicine to animals and now earns additional money by vaccinating animals for others.

Mr. Sosokhom is a 2nd cycle Small Engine Repair graduate. He was a soldier before he lost his leg. “Before UCC, I didn’t know how to work except with my gun, so after I [became an amputee] my mind was very confused. My friends and family didn’t help me. I just stayed at home.” He reported being very happy when he heard about UCCDF because “my life could change.” Mr. Sosokhom now repairs bicycles, water pumps, generators, motor bikes, and gas and diesel engines—“everything except cars.” He is married and has seven children between the ages of 6 and 16. “It would have been very hard to send my children to school without UCCDF’s



training.” Mr. Sosokhom was also able to save money to buy an air pump for his business and a black and white television.

Mr. Mak Nhorn taught Khmer literature in school, but he was forced to retire when he stepped on a mine along the road. When Mr. Nhorn became an amputee, the school principal said Mr. Nhorn “lost his ability to do his job.” He couldn’t support his family after retiring, and he “felt hopeless, disappointed.” After UCCDF training, Mr. Nhorn “no longer felt shameful or afraid,” but like “a man” again. When people in the community have problems, they come to Mr. Nhorn for solutions. He is a 3rd cycle Small Engine Repair graduate and owns two repair shops and employs four other men: three of his sons and one nonfamily member.

Mr. Simphang, a 7th cycle Electronics Repair graduate, repaired watches before coming to UCCDF. Polio has disabled him in both legs. Before UCC training Mr. Simphang “had a bad attitude. But at UCCDF, teachers guided him not to gamble.” A neighbor added that Mr. Simphang is “now a different man than before UCC.” Mr. Simphang says that “UCC helped my spirit.” In the two years since graduation, he has built a large house.

Mr. Phou Samut, a 2nd cycle Small Engine Repair graduate, said that before UCCDF’s training he was dependent on a pension, but it was so small his family couldn’t live with any comfort. Since his UCCDF training, Mr. Samut has opened his own business and earns income every day. He has been able to build a better house for his wife, his four children, and himself. Mr. Samut says, “Before UCC, I could usually send my children to school but had no money to provide their meals at school. If the children don’t have a bicycle, they won’t go to school because it is too far. But now, they have bikes and go to school.”